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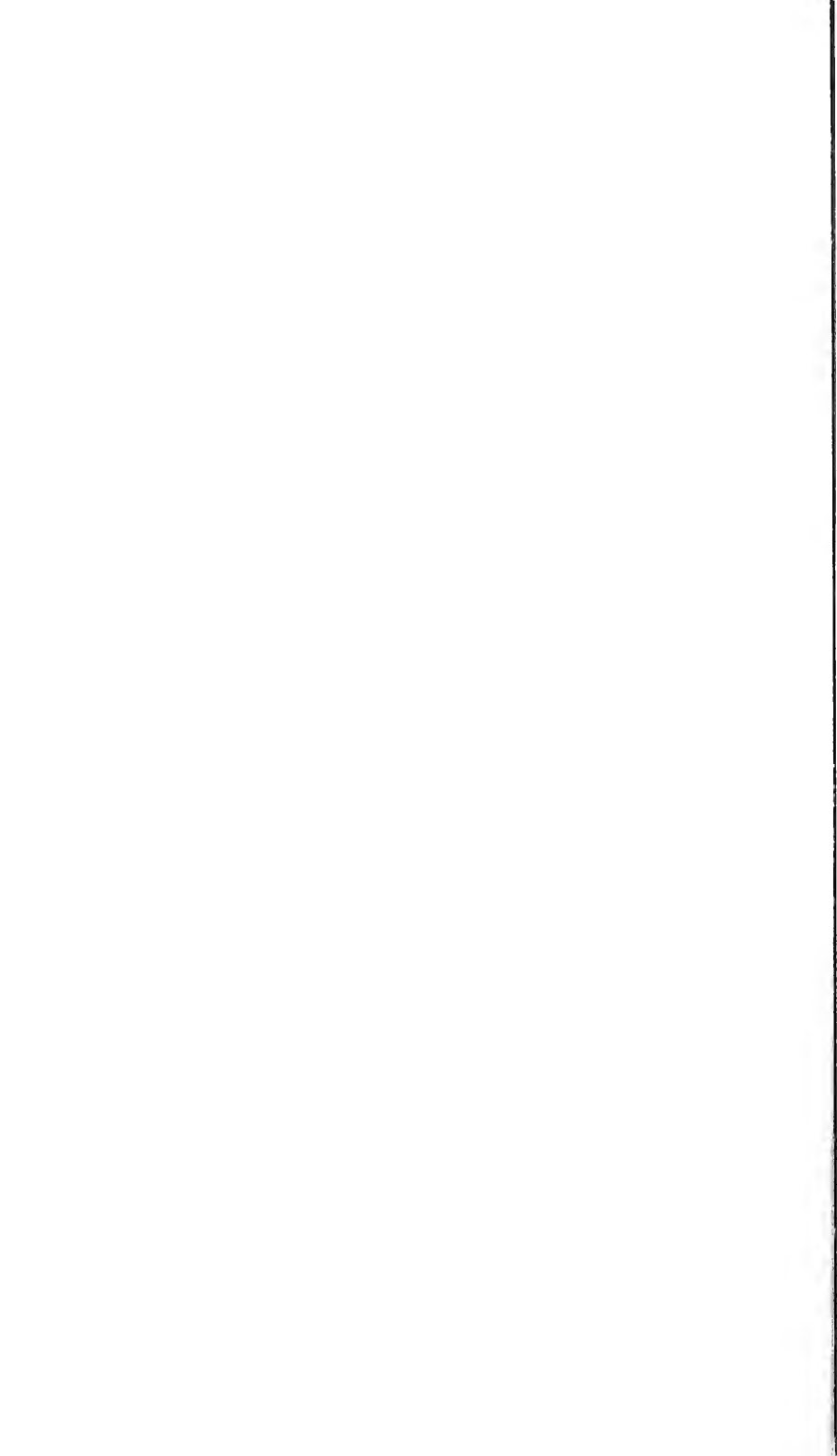
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Heath Sympson

HON. HORATIO SEYMOUR, LL. D.,

EX-GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK.

LATE PRESIDENT

OF THE

ONEIDA HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

BY

ISAAC S. HARTLEY, D. D.,

SECOND VICE PRESIDENT

O. H. S.

Capax imperii nisi imperâsset. Tacitus.

UTICA, N. Y.:

PRESS OF L. C. CHILDS & SON, 33 AND 35 CHARLOTTE STREET.

1886.

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NOTE—With a few additional sentences, the following pages are taken from the “American Magazine of History,” May, 1886. Great thanks are due and are herewith extended to Mrs. Martha J. Lamb, the accomplished editress of the same, for the accompanying accurate illustrations.

HORATIO SEYMOUR,

1810-1886.

The rapidity with which death, during the last few months, has removed some of the more distinguished of our countrymen, is quite phenomenal. The invasions have been especially among those who in military and civic service have contributed largely to the perpetuity and integrity of the Union.

On as beautiful an August day as ever shone, General Ulysses S. Grant, amid the sincere grief of the entire nation, and followed by the slow march of many thousands, found his last resting place on the banks of the beautiful Hudson. On the first day of December, Vice President Thomas A. Hendricks was carried to his home in Crown Hill Cemetery, nigh unto Indianapolis. A few weeks later, loving hands bore General George B. McClellan from his Orange Mountain home to his sepulchre in Trenton. Last February numbered among its eminent dead, General Winfield S. Hancock. The day following the funeral of this valiant soldier, the black camel knelt at the door of Horatio Seymour. Thus has the nation been bereaved since the summer solstice. What is quite as

remarkable, the last four of this distinguished group were removed after less than seven days' serious illness. That the remaining noble and faithful sons of the republic may long be preserved is the prayer of the united and prosperous nation.

Horatio Seymour came of an honored and patriotic ancestry. The family was among the earlier settlers of Hartford, Connecticut ; and contributed not a little to the glory and development of that State. In the War of the Revolution his grandfather was captain of a troop of horse ; in which capacity he served in some of its more important struggles, winning at Stillwater special praise. Of his five sons one became distinguished as a financier and president ; two became high sheriffs of the county of Litchfield ; one was a Representative, Senator and Canal Commissioner in the State of New York, and one represented the State of Vermont for twelve years in the United States Senate. His maternal ancestry was none the less noted. His mother's father, Lieutenant Colonel Forman, served in the Revolution with the New Jersey troops ; and her uncle, Colonel William Ledyard, was in command at Groton, when in 1781 it was destroyed by the traitor Arnold. In the early part of the century the father of Mr. Seymour removed from Connecticut and made his home in Pompey, Onondaga County, New York. Though now living

among strangers he soon, however, won their affections, and but a few years passed before he received from them a practical expression of their confidence, in selecting him to represent the western district in the State Senate for the years 1816-19. At this period, as the project of the Erie Canal was receiving considerable attention, he was appointed a Commissioner for the same, which he retained till 1831, when he resigned. On his removal to Utica in 1820, he was immediately elected to the Assembly; two years later was returned again to the Senate. In 1833, he became mayor of his adopted city, and subsequently discharged the duties of president of the Farmers' Loan and Trust Company till 1837, when he died.

Horatio Seymour was born in Pompey, May 31, 1810. Though he had seen but ten summers when his father removed to Utica, these early years were improved by attending the academy of his native village. When Utica became his home he was sent to the Oxford Academy; from there he went to Geneva and entered what is now known as Hobart College, where, however, he remained but two years. He was neither rugged nor strong in youth and early manhood. His parents believing therefore that an institution which had connected with it enforced drill and exercise might contribute to his strength, sent him to a military school at Middle-

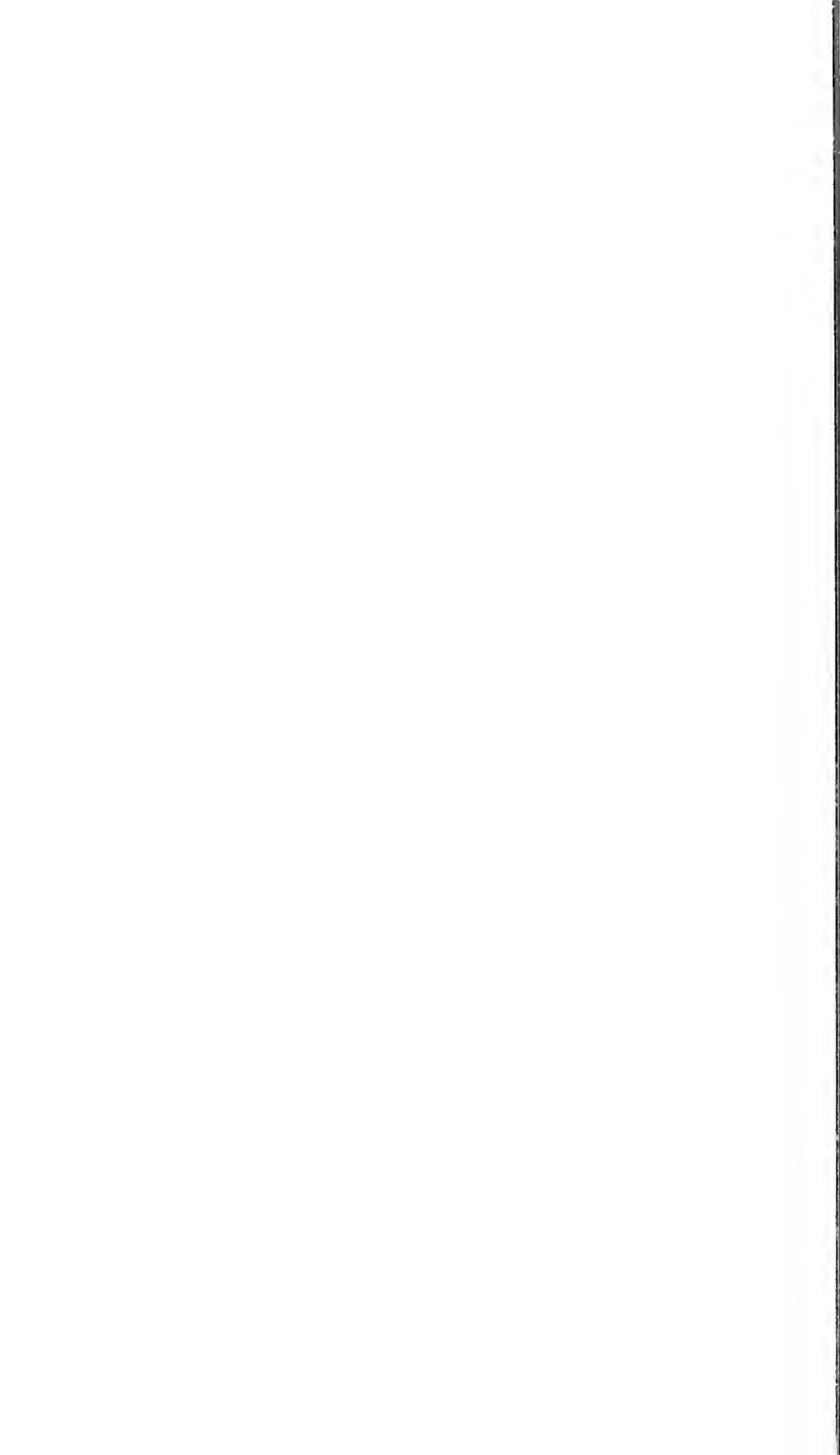
town, Connecticut. This change proved highly beneficial, as it contributed greatly to the establishment of his health, and led also to the door through which he was subsequently to pass to his many honors. The principal of this school, an officer in the army, was accustomed to take some of his pupils occasionally on a visit to Washington, and as young Seymour availed himself of this opportunity before he was sixteen years of age, he became thus early acquainted with the capital and its historic associations.

The academical curriculum completed, he returned to Utica, and after a little delay entered the law office of Greene C. Bronson and Samuel Beardsley, with whom he remained till admitted to the bar in 1832. It is questionable whether he ever possessed a natural fondness for the law, or for that close application which success in the more learned professions plainly requires. During the following year (1833) he was invited and became the private secretary of Governor Marcy, serving in that capacity seven years. Albany was then the resort of the more influential in politics, as the government was in the hands of the most distinguished men in the State, and many families of the officials made the city their temporary home. Mr. Seymour was not long in imbibing the atmosphere of his surroundings, and receiving impulses which throughout his life



HOME OF HORATIO SEYMOUR AT DEERFIELD FRONT OF HOUSE, SHOWING THE BROAD PORCH.

[Engraved from a Photograph.]



never forsook him. He received his military secretaryship through the kindness and at the solicitation of Martin Van Buren, and from the personal friendships and intimacies which now began with this great statesman, and other Democratic leaders in the State and nation, he became imbued with those broad and patriotic sentiments which he subsequently illustrated. Governor Marcy loved him as though he were his own son, and selected him as the most fit in his wide circle of acquaintance to bring in due time to a successful issue the great principles which underlie the government of the people by the people. It was at this early period that he acquired his love for the Constitution and Republican institutions. The more clearly he discovered their necessity and became acquainted with their benevolent purport, the more firmly was he convinced that they should not only be maintained, but wisely developed and yield their legitimate and desired fruit.

In 1841 he received his first office, being selected by the Democrats of Oneida County to represent them in the Assembly. At this time New York was somewhat disturbed by political jealousies, and but few dared to predict their outcome. His fellow Assemblymen included the historic names of Sanford E. Church, Levi S. Chatfield, John A. Dix, David R. Floyd Jones, Michael Hoffman, and others who a few years later received the highest political

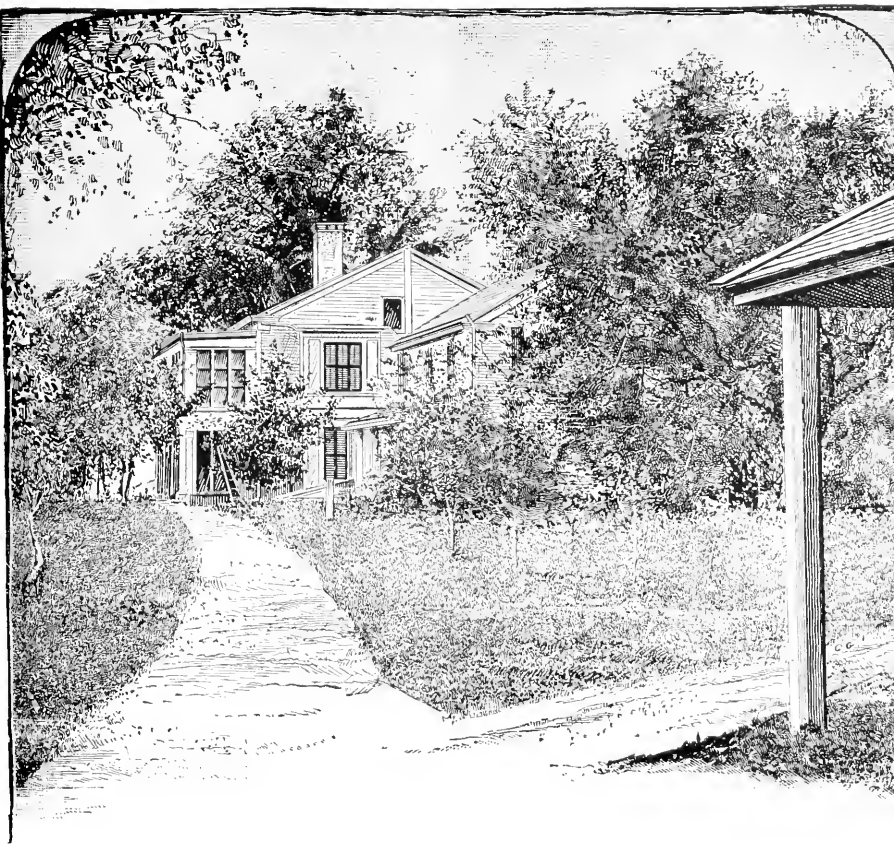
positions in the gift of the State. The attitude of Governor Bouck had somewhat divided the Democratic party, resulting in crimination and recrimination, nor did the sharp discussions concerning the canal policy which now occurred tend to heal the increasing difficulties. On the contrary, the Democratic party found itself divided, one wing being represented by Mr. Hoffman, the other by Mr. Seymour. As the counsels of Mr. Seymour finally prevailed, from this hour many looked upon him as rapidly advancing toward political leadership. Returning to Utica, the next year he became its mayor; and in the years 1843-4 was returned to the Assembly. In entering anew upon State legislation he found that none of the previous politico-personal frictions which had so recently revealed themselves had disappeared; still the party which he represented on so many issues was strongly united. One thing was manifest; within the past few years the gulf between the Whigs and Democrats had widened, and both were bent on obtaining the mastery. Combinations, of which there is no room now to speak, brought upon the Whig party perhaps the most inglorious disaster in its entire history; and the more so when it is remembered that its strongest representative, in the person of Millard Fillmore, was put in nomination for the governorship, and the candidate for the Presidency was none

other than Henry Clay, the idol of the American people.

The triumphs of the Democratic party in this heated canvass brought Mr. Seymour once more into prominence. He became Speaker of the Assembly, and, by virtue of his influence, did much to heal the differences existing among his political associates and secure the advance of Democratic principles.

In 1850 he became the nominee of his party for Governor; but owing to the popularity of his opponent, Washington Hunt, and a division among the Democrats, Mr. Seymour was defeated. When renominated in 1852 he was elected. Later, in the years 1854, 1862, and 1864, the gubernatorial chair was again offered to him, but he was successful only in the election of 1862. The force which contributed very seriously to his defeat in 1854 grew out of party dissensions and jealousies, differences on the Kansas-Nebraska bill, and the appearance of the Know-Nothings, who voted with the opposition. Perhaps the most important question which busied the larger number in the State during this period of Governor Seymour's magistracy was what was known as the Maine Law. As this law had been adopted by at least one of the New England States, and the others were giving it serious consideration, its friends sought an early opportunity to lay it be-

fore the Legislature of New York. Contrary to the expectation of many of nearly every shade of political opinion, though adopted by the Legislature, Governor Seymour attached to it his veto. Not that the evil to be removed was insignificant, or that it did not merit the closest thought of the wise and philanthropic; still less that the liquor traffic did not work wretchedness—ruin, indeed, that government could afford to disregard; but prohibitory legislation was neither sound statesmanship nor constitutional. Its logical sequence was to provoke resistance rather than secure the desired obedience. The prohibition demanded was also impossible of execution and unwise in principle: a verdict the people rendered when, a few years after its adoption, under Governor Clark, in 1854, the law was repealed. Governor Seymour's position in the main was that intemperance was a sore evil, but depriving citizens of their rights and personal liberties was a greater wrong. Men are not reformed by law-making, nor does severity conquer the lawless. Laws are wise only as they have education, morality, and religion for their bases, and not coercion—an opinion the Supreme Court a little later fully sustained. Though the views of Governor Seymour had thus been confirmed by the decision of the Court, still it is very doubtful whether any of his previous official acts received more severe and unkind criticism. In



SIDE VIEW OF THE SEYMOUR HOMESTEAD.

[Engraved from a Photograph.]

the storm, however, he remained true to his convictions, both as to the mission of law and to the great principle which he considered as underlying Democratic government.

During the intermitting years of Horatio Seymour's public trusts the State and nation passed through extraordinary trials. While the State was divided and subdivided into many political factions, and the nation was rapidly realizing that a moral cancer was threatening its very life, and differences existed concerning the policies in the new States and Territories, a new party appeared whose mission was to right, if possible, existing wrongs, and free the country from the troubles now investing it. It called itself the Republican party. As its purposes became understood, many of previously conflicting opinions identified themselves with it. Quite contemporaneous with the birth of this party, the clouds which had been gradually gathering, thickened and darkened. At last the nation found itself engaged in fratricidal war.

Though not occupying any official position at the outbreak of the war, when, however, it had been formally declared, and means for defence had been entered upon, Mr. Seymour was convinced it should be prosecuted. His popularity at this period is seen in his succeeding Governor Morgan in the Governorship. Never since New York became a State had

one of its magistrates been summoned to a position more difficult to fill than the one on which he now entered. While believing that the rupture might have been avoided, and the life and property which it threatened and finally consumed could have been spared, and attributing its origin as much to the intemperate speech of the North as to the error and obliquity of the South, he deplored the struggle and denounced the rebellion as most wicked; the more so as it aimed at the wreck of a government than which he felt none better had the world ever seen. Governor Seymour was a war Democrat of the purest luster. At the opening of the conflict, when the general government appealed to New York for assistance, he was made chairman of a committee of his own county to raise needed troops; and by purse, influence, and word did much to preserve the dignity and integrity of the Union. Having been inaugurated Governor in 1863, his first message to the legislature contained these loyal words: "At this moment the fortunes of our country are influenced by the results of battles. Our armies in the field must be supported, all constitutional demands of the general government must be responded to. . . . Under no circumstances can the division of the Union be conceded. We will put forth every exertion of power; we will use every policy of conciliation; we will hold out every inducement to

the people of the South to return to their allegiance consistent with honor; we will guarantee them every right, every consideration demanded by the Constitution, and by the fraternal regard which must prevail in a common country, but we can never voluntarily consent to the breaking up of the Union of these States or the destruction of the Constitution."

Necessarily omitting references to those numerous measures which Governor Seymour at this crucial period in the nation's life proposed for its integrity, as well as all consideration of the addresses which he so frequently delivered bearing upon the issues of that day, including his special messages to the Legislature, and the firmness with which he declared that at all risks the public faith and credit of the State should never be impaired, the appearance, however, of the "riots" caused him and others of every political complexion great alarm. But the roots of these disturbances existed anterior to his administration. The thistles, and the thistles only, were his. At this period, in the estimation of not a few, the conflict had become nothing but an abolition war, and an influential portion of the public press would have the people so believe. This opinion begat not only new differences, but gave new force likewise to the inquiry, whether the general government was not violating by its acts the Constitution,

and trampling upon rights which its very genius conferred. While these convictions were spreading, the North was fairly appalled at its misfortunes. The oft-beaten Army of the Potomac was moving forward to cover Washington and Baltimore ; the experiences at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville were fresh ; Hooker was about being relieved of his command on the eve of a decisive struggle ; Grant was held at bay by Vicksburg, and Banks by Port Hudson, and in Middle Tennessee Rosecrans was inactive. Volunteers were also slow in enlistment. To remedy the strain to which the government was rapidly being subjected, an act providing for the enrollment of the national forces was adopted. Attempting to enforce this same act precipitated the riots. No sooner, however, did this spirit of insubordination exhibit itself than Governor Seymour sought to arrest it by force and by words. The latter, owing to the disturbed condition of the public mind, received from many unkindly criticism.

Governor Seymour never denied the abused phrase ; on the contrary, he acknowledged it would have been wiser perhaps to have chosen language less exposed to twist and misinterpretation. In brief, his relations to the war were quite as pronounced as many sitting in the halls of legislation, or active in the field. So promptly did he respond to the requisition which President Lincoln made

upon him for troops, that he received from him a letter of thanks and congratulations; later the Secretary of War sent him a similar communication; and still later, the President again wrote him acknowledgements.

As this correspondence possesses unusual importance and has a historical significance, it is introduced somewhat in detail.

June 15th, 1863, the Secretary of War sent to Governor Seymour the following dispatch:

"Will you please inform me immediately, if, in answer to a special call of the President, you can raise and forward, say twenty thousand militia as volunteers without bounty, to be credited on the draft of your State; or what number you can possibly raise?"

"Edwin M. Stanton."

To the telegram it was replied:

"I will spare no efforts to send you troops at once.

"Horatio Seymour."

Later the same day this additional message was sent to the Secretary of War:

"I will order the New York and Brooklyn troops to Philadelphia at once. Where can they get arms, if any are needed?"

"Horatio Seymour."

These two despatches were followed by a third to the same address, reading:

"We have two thousand enlisted volunteers. I will have them consolidated into companies and regiments, and sent on at once. You must provide them with arms.

"Horatio Seymour."

In reply to the above prompt action, four days afterwards, Governor Seymour received the following:

WASHINGTON, JUNE 19, 1863.

"The President directs me to return his thanks to his Excellency Governor Seymour and his staff, for their energetic and prompt action.

"Edwin M. Stanton,

"Secretary of War."

Later, Secretary Stanton wrote to Governor Seymour as follows:

(Confidential.)

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, }
June 27, 1863. }

"*Dear Sir:*—I cannot forbear expressing to you the deep obligation I feel for the prompt and cordial support you have given to the Government in the present emergency. The energy, activity and patriotism you have exhibited, I may be permitted personally and officially to acknowledge, without arrogating any personal claim on my part in such service, or to any service whatever. I shall be happy always to be esteemed your friend.

"Edwin M. Stanton."

Three months earlier than these despatches and letters, President Lincoln penned these words to Governor Seymour:

(Private and Confidential.)

Washington, March 23, 1863.

To His Excellency Governor Horatio Seymour:

"You and I are substantially strangers, and I write chiefly that we may become better acquainted. I, for the time being, am at the head of a nation which is in great peril, and you are at the head of the greatest State in that nation. As to maintaining the nation's life and integrity, I assume and believe there cannot be any difference of purpose between you and me. If we should differ as to the means, it is important that such difference should be as small as possible; that it should not be enhanced by unjust suspicions on the one side or the other. In the performance of my duty, the coöperation of your State, as that of others, is needed: in fact, it is indispensable. This alone is a sufficient reason why I should wish to be at a good understanding with you. Please write, etc.

"A. Lincoln."

To this frank communication from the President, Governor Seymour in part replied :

“ I assure you that no political resentment, no personal purpose will turn me aside from the pathway I have marked out. I intend to show those charged with the administration of public affairs a due deference and respect; and to give to them a just and generous support in all the measures they may adopt within the scope of their constitutional powers. For the preservation of this Union, I am ready to make any sacrifice of interest, passion or prejudice.

“ Truly yours,

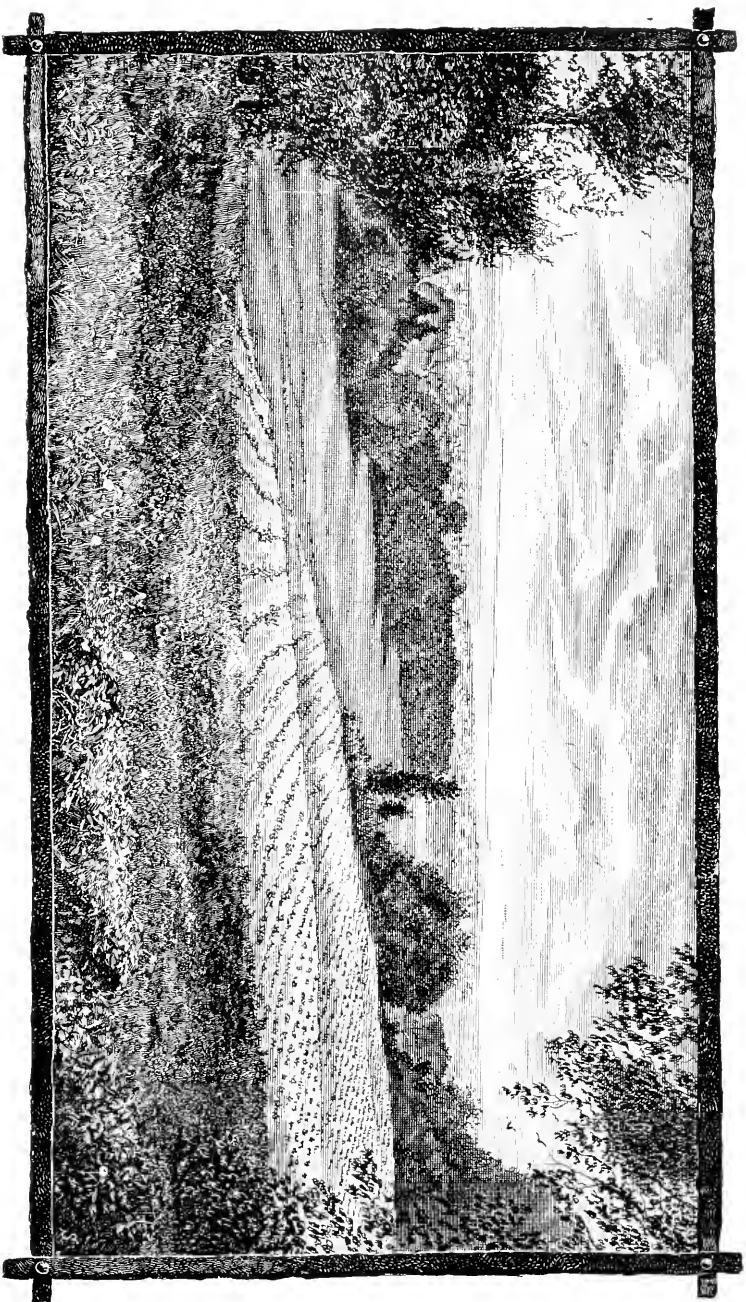
“ Horatio Seymour.”

Indeed, when the great question in all its nakedness came before Governor Seymour,—shall the Union be preserved?—no one looked at this truth more soberly, nor did any display a more determined purpose. In presence of this inquiry, those far-reaching problems which no statesman can safely overlook—personal freedom, the rights of the individual States, the consideration of sectional interests, or the functions of a free government—were wholly secondary. Every blow at the dismemberment of the Union aroused him to new, more vigorous, and persistent effort. Amidst the excitement of these war hours the problem which came home to him with seriousness was not, as some have conjectured, whether the national unity shall be broken, but now that it is in jeopardy, what were the wisest and the legitimate methods by which it could be conserved and its perpetuity forever secured? But the political history and attitude of Horatio Seymour during this terrible

period of national strife must be left to his biographer. When it shall have been written, it will be seen that he was a loyal son to the institutions he so ardently loved; and that the suspicions attached to his name had their rise in heated imaginations, and in the bitter animosities of an overstrained partisanship.

At the expiration of Governor Seymour's war term he resolved to return to his rural home and devote himself to study and rest. He did so. His past influence, however, with men, his profound knowledge of affairs, and the wisdom which his admirers observed had characterized so many of his public relations, led many to solicit his opinion on the numerous political measures then in process of formation. He was presently selected as a candidate for governor in opposition to Reuben E. Fenton. In this canvass he was defeated by a slight majority, attributable as believed to some irregularity in the returns.

When in 1868 the National Convention was called for the selection of a candidate for the Presidency, Horatio Seymour attended the assembly as a delegate, and was chosen, as at the preceding National Convention, its presiding officer. The supposable candidates were Salmon P. Chase, Judge Sanford E. Church, and George H. Pendleton. On the earlier ballots Mr. Pendleton led. Later, the



View from the Broad Porch of the Seymour Homestead Looking South. The City of Utica Lies Among the Trees in the Distance, and Beyond are Clinton Hills,
the Seat of Hamilton College.
[Engraved from a Photograph.]

names of General W. S. Hancock and Thomas A. Hendricks were introduced; but as no conclusion could be reached, the name of Mr. Pendleton was withdrawn on the third day of the session, after the polling of the eighteenth ballot, and Horatio Seymour's was introduced; and notwithstanding his earnest protest, it was unanimously resolved that he be the candidate. As General Grant received the nomination of the Republican Convention, and was then wearing the many laurels which he had honestly won in the service of his country, and as the many differences in the Republican ranks had been healed, Mr. Seymour was in the election defeated. With the close of this campaign his political life may be said to have come to an end.

The great disputes which the war had awakened were over, peace prevailed throughout the country, the industries of the nation were beginning again to move, and the policy of the government, for several years at least, had been determined; thus there was no reason forbidding him the retirement he had been coveting. Contrary, however, to his oft-expressed wishes, he was renominated in 1876 for Governor; and had it not been for his resolve to pass his remaining years in retirement, he would have been sent the same year to the United States Senate, rather than his life-long and accomplished friend and townsman, Francis Kernan. The other

official positions proffered to Horatio Seymour were State Senator and Congressman. He held likewise at various times the following offices: in 1868 he was chosen one of the first of the Commissioners of State Fisheries; in 1876 member of the State Survey, and in 1878 president of the Board of Commissioners of State Survey. For many years he occupied the presidency of the National Dairymen's Association, of the American Prison Association, and was the presiding officer of the Oneida County Historical Society from its inception till his death.

It is worthy of note here that the many positions which had been offered to Mr. Seymour by his neighbors, his district, his State, and the nation, came wholly unsolicited. He never asked for office. He has been known to have absented himself from the conventions of his party lest his presence might indicate a desire for political advancement, rather than the maintenance and enforcement of wise and just measures. It could easily be shown that, if his numerous friends had been able to coerce his acceptance of the nomination of the conventions when the names of Tilden, Hancock and Cleveland were selected, Horatio Seymour would have received a most honorable support. His nomination for the Presidency was as completely unexpected as the defeat of the aspirants for the position. Nor did he yield to the pressure brought upon him, till he

had entered an honest protest at the course taken, and assured the convention that it was acting in direct opposition to his best convictions, as well as the welfare of their party, saying to the assembled delegates, "Your candidate I cannot be."

A subject very near the heart of Mr. Seymour remains to be mentioned. From the hour of his entrance upon public life he took a deep interest in its waterways; more especially in the canal that bound the great West to the Hudson and the seaboard. In caring for this canal and securing for it wise legislation, he was ever active. He early discovered its usefulness and foresaw the bearing also which this great waterway would have upon the building up of the commonwealth, the enriching and developing of the city of New York, and thus indirectly upon the growth of the country. Though the canal system had in its formative days the counsels of such men as Gouverneur Morris, De Witt Clinton, Robert R. Livingston and Robert Fulton; and later, when the Erie was opened, it received the supervision of such commissioners as Ephraim Hart, Henry Seymour, John Bowman, and William C. Bouck, there were many evils connected with its workings, unconsciously hindering its usefulness. As early as 1844, when Horatio Seymour was a member of the Assembly, he presented a report to that body covering seventy octavo pages,

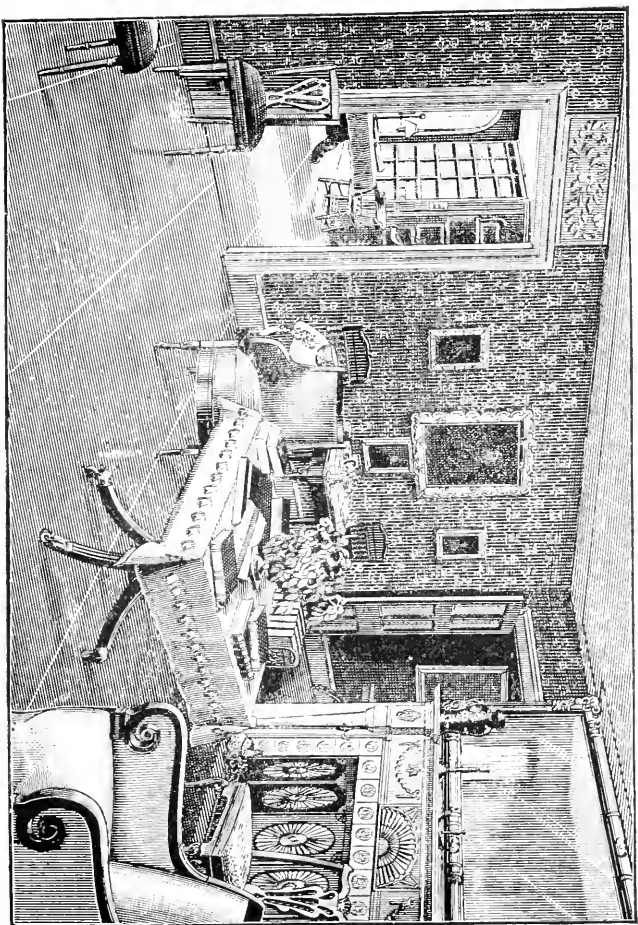
in which he outlined what should be the policy of the State in reference to its waterways, a report still yielding fruit. He studied the mode of transit in all its bearings. An investigation into the canal system of the State of New York will show that but few, if any, have ever given more time to its consideration, have more firmly opposed its surrender to the ownership or control of rival railway corporations, or been more earnest in bringing about the abolition of toll. Indeed, the last address delivered by Mr. Seymour was before the Canal Conference, which held its sessions last autumn in the city of Utica.

During this period of his busy career he wrote for and addressed the public not only on political questions, but on themes purely philanthropic, and wholly unpartisan. His speeches, messages, and proclamations would easily make an octavo volume of many hundred pages up to the year 1868, when he contemplated retirement. His contributions for the following fourteen years in the State library at Albany constitute two more volumes; and since this period another volume could readily be formed. The range of his occasional addresses was unusually broad. Agriculture, political economy, social ethics, jurisprudence, philology, education, topography and history were in turn considered. His contributions to the topography and history of the State are most

valuable. He studied its natural resources, its history and its capabilities with devotion. In this respect he was an intense New Yorker. Few were better acquainted with New York's beginnings, had more knowledge of its colonial days, or were better versed in its historic struggles—their origin, their location and their results; or labored with greater assiduity to have them perpetuated. The last two monuments with which his name will ever be associated are those commemorating the battle of Saratoga, and the terrible conflict under Herkimer at Oriskany. Governor Seymour was well informed also in Indian history. His articles on the Iroquois, the Romans of the new world, are quite numerous. He studied with great care their habits, travels, wars, and antiquities; nor could he free himself from the conviction that the aborigines of the State had been greatly wronged. On one occasion he visited the Auburn prison and addressed its unfortunate inmates in language and sentiment, which, whether viewed from the side of philanthropy or philosophy, may be regarded as an American classic.

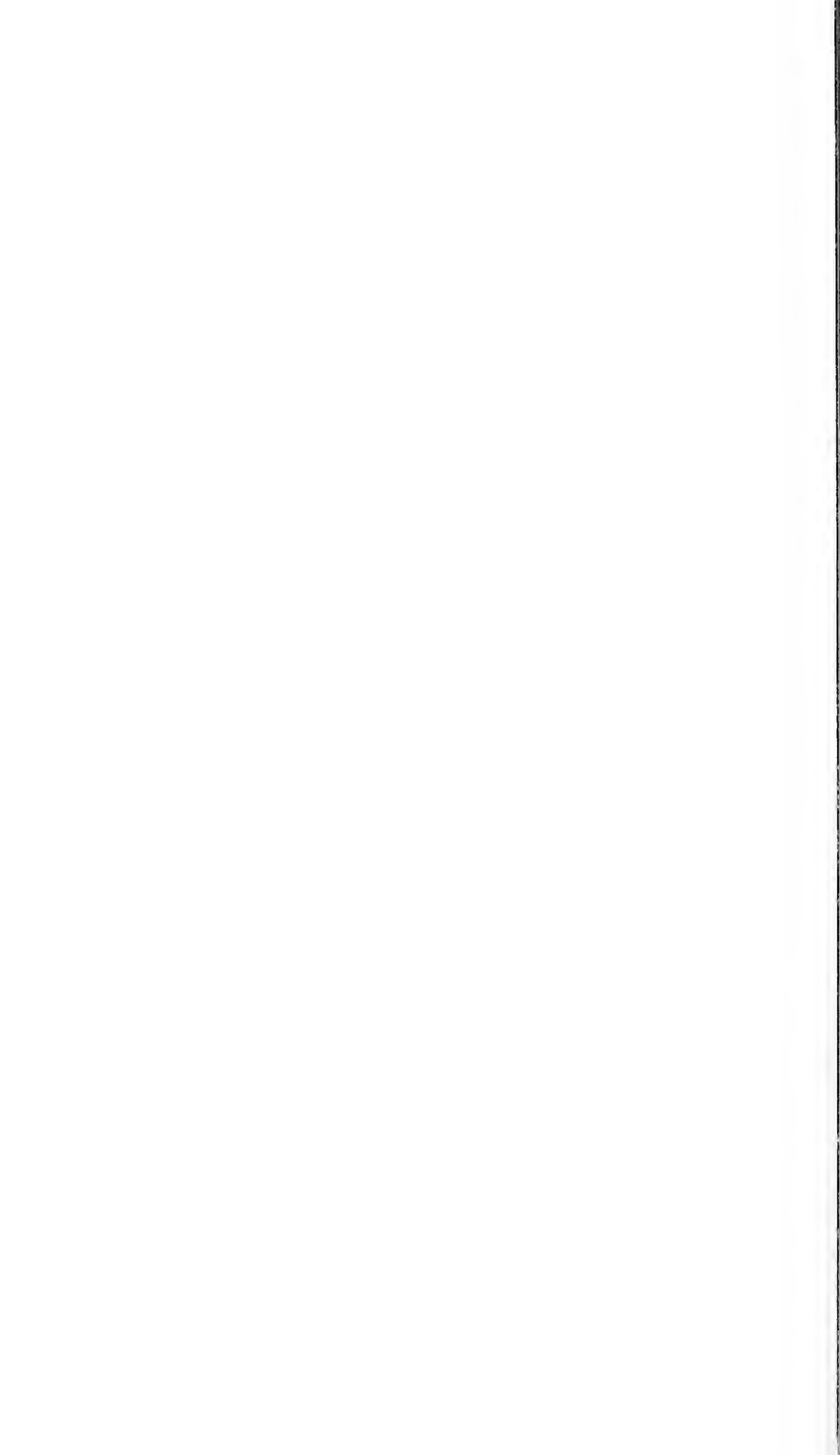
Horatio Seymour was naturally a leader of men. He impressed them with his earnestness, sagacity and sincerity. He loved the institutions among which he was born and whose interests he undeviatingly sought for the good with which they were fraught, and the possibilities connected with their

logical development. As a consequence, his political life nowhere reveals the preference of self to local, State, or national measures, or the sacrifice of principle to the interests of personal ambition. All individuality was sunk in the results desired; self ever rendering lowly obeisance to the public weal. Few men in public or private life have revealed such an even and rounded character. There was a charm about him quite irresistible. He did not wait for others to get at his love and sympathy; it was theirs at once. All who came to him received prompt recognition; the poor and the humble as they whose names were embroidered with titles. His love for our common humanity was intense. Indeed, in every human being he recognized certain conditions of happiness, and so far as possible labored for their development. He loved men because they were men. Sympathy and friendliness permeated his very being; nor did he ever delay to have these virtues awakened. He was as responsive to appeal as the harp when touched by skillful fingers. Misfortune, whatever form it assumed, grieved him and even called out practical response. His beneficiaries were almost innumerable, and unlimited by creed or nationality. As he abhorred unchastity and despised dishonor and deceit, so cruelty in all its forms vexed him. Everything that could know pain belonged to his Father's Kingdom. His



PARLOR OF THE SEYMOUR HOMESTEAD WITH GLIMPSE OF LIBRARY BEYOND.

[Engraved from a Photograph.]



benignity and thoughtfulness made him the child of the people. Even his political opponents enrolled themselves among his friends, nor was there any against whom he harbored the least enmity. Party lines no more divided his respect than geographical divisions show the courses of the rivers. The trickery of the politician and unprincipled partisanship were beneath his notice. Never would he lend his voice or name to what he believed was in itself wrong.

Remembering the freedom that is so often taken with the name and personality of men in public life, it has often been asked how Governor Seymour escaped the scandals of the traducer and the wit of the defamer. The solution is to be found in the uniformity and excellency of his character. All the years of his public life fail to disclose an act that affects either his honesty, purity, or uprightness, or that mars his escutcheon with a single blot. Even in the exciting periods and amidst the bitter struggle of partisan warfare the tongue of reproach never assailed him, nor was there a failing in his private life over which the world could be merry. In the varied relations of man, citizen, ruler, he was a model. To be right, to do right, to be virtuous and to keep virtuous constituted his ambition.

Mr. Seymour possessed deep convictions, and he had the courage to express, and if need be also to

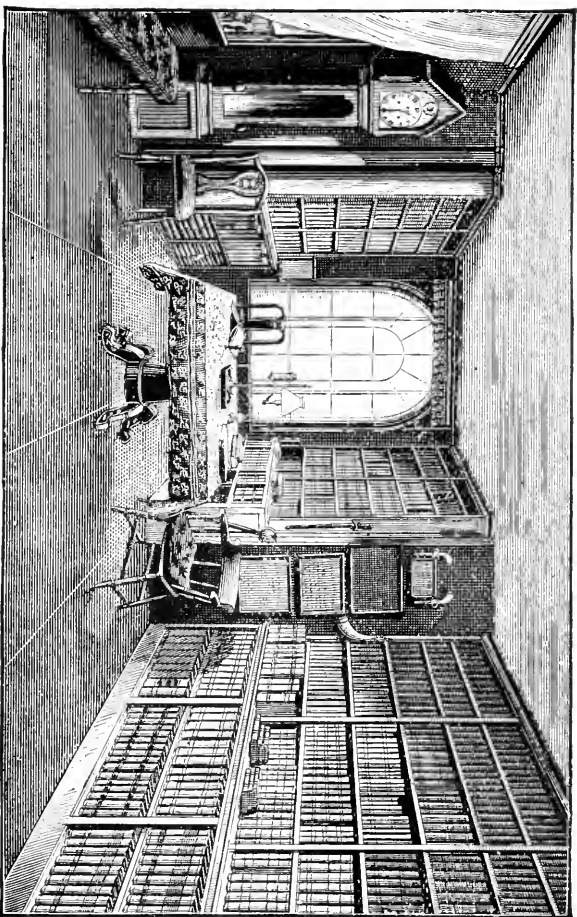
defend them. On party and national questions, it was not difficult to place him. Liberal yet conservative, and anxious only for the truth and what could best subserve the State or nation. He was a partisan, but it never interfered with or shadowed his patriotism. He was too much of a statesman to be a politician, and too thoughtful to be either selfish or imperious. His greatest solicitation was to serve the republic and give her the influence among the nations her institutions so justly merited. What he was as an orator he was by nature. His thoughts were always clothed in the simplest language, and the evidence that he had weighed his sentences made his discourses invariably pleasant and instructive. He spoke with gracefulness and deliberation, never resorting to the tricks of persuasion, nor suffering himself to be hampered by a manuscript. At times, the majesty and magnetism of his presence were all conquering. Erect, with his right hand thrust between the front buttons of his coat, was his favorite attitude. His reading was varied ; during the last twenty years he made himself familiar especially with agriculture and the science and practice of farming.

Devotedly attached to nature, he loved her fields and her forests, and wandered among her beauties thoughtfully and reverently. He had a passion for flowers, and, as he nursed them, always gave ear to

their impressible speech ; in a word, their multiple colors and fragrance wooed him. His beautiful and retired home on his farm in Deerfield will possess for the future the same class of memories as linger about the historic places, Marshfield, Monticello, and the Hermitage. It is situated on the southern slope of one of the hills of the same name on the upper bank of the Mohawk, about two miles from Utica. The dwelling itself is unpretentious. The large oaks, elms, pines, and shrubbery about it invest it, however, with great attractions. While he loved to sit upon its broad porch and lend himself to the rich associations of the valley at his feet, with whose traditions and history he was so familiar, the library was his favorite resort, and he gladly received in it his many visitors. Conceive of a plain room, with walls partially hidden by well-filled book-cases, an open fire-place, and furniture of the olden time, and you have the retreat he called his happy and restful home. The relics and curiosities therein are interesting and of great variety ; numerous early maps, Indian trophies, early deeds, historic swords and fire-arms, arrows, powder-horns, and like links of the past. The chair at his table formerly belonged to Daniel Webster ; the old clock in the corner that still ticks, dates from the early colonial days. Within this pleasant room he made you feel as though nothing stood between you and himself.

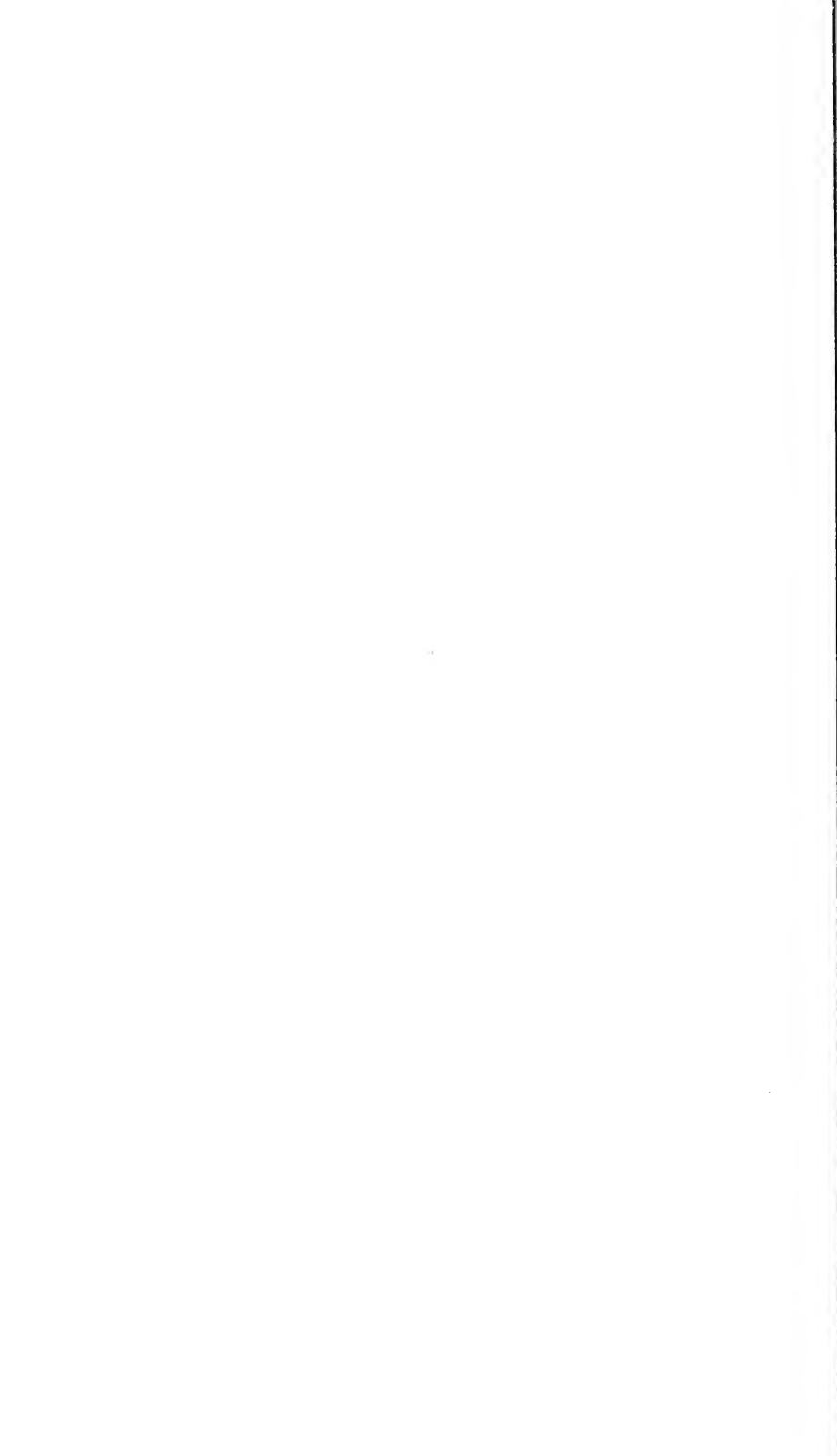
His conversation was rapid, suggestive, and very entertaining. Those who left his presence no wiser after these conversational seasons, had not listened to the melody or the inspiration of his speech.

His humor was always pleasant, never coarse ; and not unfrequently his most amusing anecdotes concerned himself. In his manner he was gentle, courteous, and dignified, and free from even the appearance of affectation. In his tastes he was scholarly, and yet he studied men and events more devotedly than volumes. In his religious views he was as clear and definite as in those that pertained to the welfare of the State. Christianity with him was a living force, and only they could be what they ought who were governed by its teachings. His presence was often seen in the higher councils of the Episcopal Church, and on many occasions by voice, pen, purse, and influence he furthered its interests. For very many years he was a warden in old Trinity Church, Utica, and until quite recently one of its regular attendants. The church-going habit of Governor Seymour may be seen in the following characteristic incident. Not long since, in looking over a volume discolored by age, a little slip dropped from the same, which proved to be a record of his fellow-students while at Geneva, who had absented themselves from church. The slip was dated Trinity Church, Geneva, June 13, 1824.



HORATIO SEYMOUR'S LIBRARY.

[Engraved from a Photograph.]



Among these absentees was a still surviving friend. Enclosing his own photograph and the same bit of yellow paper, he sent the same to his early companion, with these words :

“ My dear Church,

“ You were late at church forty-two years ago. So says this scrap of paper that comes fluttering down to us through half a century like an autumn leaf. It dropped out of an old book at Geneva where it was put by some one who died long since. When you look at it you will feel like one reading a tombstone. With a few exceptions it is a list of dead men. We have seen things, strange things, since that little record of neglected duties was made up. I send you the likeness of one whom I am glad to say was not absent from church on the 13th of June, 1824. As you see he is a battered, bald-headed old man now. Then he was a smooth-faced school-boy, with a full head of hair and a large stock of hope and conceit. Well, as I have said, we have seen much that is startling in the last fifty years. In all human probability we shall see something more startling within the next five years. Most of us will be packed up and dropped into our graves. It seems that we have not been wanted in either of the departments of the other world up to this time. I do not think that we shall be overlooked much longer. It is high time for you to mend your habits as to church-going or some worse record may turn up against you than the one I now send you.

“ Truly yours,

“ Horatio Seymour.”

In the summer of 1876, Governor Seymour received a partial sunstroke while performing the duties of path master on the road of his town, the only office, as he once remarked, he had sought. This was the beginning of his decline. Though occasionally detained within doors by the usual accompaniments of age and the fears from exposure to excessive heat or cold, serious illness, however, did not overtake him till a few days before his

death. His devoted wife, feeling the need of medical assistance, and nearer than that which their country home afforded, he accompanied her to the city, making their home for the time being with his sister, Mrs. Roscoe Conkling. When he learned her true condition and that her recovery was very improbable, he was deeply affected. Almost immediately great languor and weakness ensued, followed by recurring nausea. A few days later an effusion of blood at the base of the brain supervened, when

“He gave his honors to the world again,
His blessed past to heaven and slept in peace,”

dying with no last words, February 12, 1886, in the seventy-sixth year of his age.

Horatio Seymour married, May 31, 1835, Mary, the youngest daughter of John Rutger Bleecker, of Albany. While writing this rapid sketch of her loving and loved husband, she also has gone to the brightness beyond. Their mortal remains, awaiting the summons “Come forth,” rest side by side in Forest Hill Cemetery, Utica, New York.

Death never takes one alone, but two!
Whenever he enters in at a door,
Under roof of gold or roof of thatch.
He always leaves it upon the latch,
And comes again ere the year is o'er;
Never one of a household only.









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